

## Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 FEA-01 ACDA-10 AGR-10

AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FMC-02 TRSE-00

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02

OES-06 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

SAL-01 /149 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5962

INFO USUN NEW YORK 2011

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 7193

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN LAW MINISTER ON LOS NEGOTIATIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 7192

1. THE INDIAN PRESS MAY 14 CARRIES AN INTERVIEW WITH LAW MINISTER GOKHALE WHO HAS JUST RETURNED FROM THE LOS NEGOTIATING SESSION IN NEW YORK. HIS COMMENTS ON THE ARCHIPELAGO QUESTION ARE REPORTED IN REFTEL. AS PIECED TOGETHER FROM THE SEVERAL PRESS ACCOUNTS OF THE INTERVIEW, HE MADE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. ON THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY, GOKHALE COMPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH THE BIG POWERS ARE NOT OPPOSED TO THE AUTHORITY, THEY HAVE ASSERTED THE RIGHT OF ANY COUNTRY TO EXPLOIT THE MINERAL RESOURCES IN THE HIGH SEAS. GOKHALE SAID THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO MAINTAIN THEIR SOLIDARITY ON THIS ISSUE, FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE RIGHT CLAIMED BY THE BIG POWERS WOULD BE "HIGHLY UNCLASSIFIED

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DANGEROUS." "WE FEEL THAT THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED

AUTHORITY WILL BECOME INFRUCTUOUS ONCE THE BIG POWERS ARE PERMITTED TO EXPLOIT THE SEABED RESOURCES FOR THEIR BENEFIT."

2. THE LAW MINISTER IS REPORTED FURTHER SAYING THAT THE BIG POWERS' VIEW THAT THE ECONOMIC ZONE SHOULD BE REGARDED AS PART OF THE HIGH SEAS IS ALSO UNACCEPTABLE. INDIA HAS TAKEN A VERY CATEGORICAL POSITION THAT IT WOULD NOT ACCEPT THIS VIEW.

3. ON THE RIGHTS OF THE LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES, GOKHALE SAID INDIA RECOGNIZES THEIR RIGHT TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE SEA BUT FELT THAT THE RIGHT OF TRANSIT SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED AND THE RIGHT SHOULD BE RECIPROCAL. SO FAR AS INDIA WAS CONCERNED, THE MAIN LANDLOCKED COUNTRY WAS NEPAL. GOKHALE SAID THE CONTROVERSY COULD NOT BE RESOLVED TO DATE BECAUSE SOME COASTAL STATES WERE NOT WILLING TO RECOGNIZE THE LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES' RIGHTS IN THE ECONOMIC ZONE, INCLUDING TRANSIT THROUGH THE OCEAN.SAXBE

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